

ARPA Proposal Form – Online Permitting

Submitter Contact Information

Name: John Guskowski, Zoning Enforcement Officer

Mailing address: Town of Chester, 203 Middlesex Avenue, Chester CT 06412

Telephone number: 860-455-8251

E-mail address: zoningofficial@chesterct.org

Proposal information

Business, non-profit, government or civic organization: Local Government Entity

Description of project: Establishment of an online land-use permitting system, in conjunction with the Town of Deep River, that would migrate our Zoning, Wetlands, Health, and Building Permits to a cloud-based online format. The proposal has been provided by OpenGov, which is operating under an existing municipal contract bid through the Capitol Region Council of Governments. OpenGov has provided Deep River and Chester with a shared price to cover both Towns at the cost of a single municipal client. The two Towns currently share Building, Zoning, and Health Officials, as well as a shared online GIS system (via CAI).

ARPA funds requested (\$): \$20,000 (\$10,000 for Chester's share of the one-time setup, and \$10,000 for the first year of maintenance)

Who would most benefit from the project if approved: Residents and developers who are seeking to improve their properties would be able to submit applications online without having to come to Town Hall (and possibly Old Saybrook/CRAHD) and rearrange their schedules to coincide with the limited hours of availability of land use officials. They would also be able to track their permit processing online and view existing and pending permits. Land Use officials would be able to process applications online as well, and thus would be able to review and approve documents at any time, rather than only during limited office hours.

Positive impact of project to the Chester community: This project directly delivers upon one of the fundamental purposes of ARPA funds – to increase the ability of the public to avail themselves of key government functions in a digital, online, or remote format. There would be no need to come to Town Hall, which is not only inconvenient (particularly given the limited hours that the Zoning, Building, Wetlands, and Health officers have in Chester) but it is also increasing the public health response by enabling more contact-free e-government. The result of this would be both better record keeping and real-time tracking of permits, but a much more efficient system of application submission and processing and a faster response time.